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Tavistock Rural District

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1965

Underhill (Plymouth) Ltd., Printers, Regent Street, Plymouth

PUBLIC HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEE

The following members of the Council served on the Public Health and Housing Committee during the year:

Chairman: Mr. N. H. Gerry

Vice-Chairman: Mr. H. W. Sherrell

Mr. P. R. Blanchard
Mr. F. J. Bromell
Mr. E. H. Conybeare
Mr. A. W. Friend
Mr. W. I. Hawkins
Mr. J. B. Hill
Mr. W. H. L. Hillson
Mr. H. M. James
Mr. J. H. Martin
Mr. G. V. Perkin
Mr. L. M. Pridham
Mr. D. C. Straughen, J.P.
Mr. R. W. Toop
Mr. A. J. Warne
Mr. N. B. Youldon
Mr. G. S. Bliss
Mr. L. F. Burley
Mr. C. H. Crocker
Mrs. H. E. Heathman-Glass
Mr. S. Hicks
Miss M. P. Hillson
Mr. W. J. Hosking
Mr. R. E. Maddock
Mr. V. Mounce
Mr. P. T. Perry
Major G. V. Rolleston, J.P.
Wing-Cdr. H. G. Taylor
Mr. J. W. Vogwill
Mrs. E. Rundle Wood

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health
E. D. ALLEN-PRICE, M.D., CH.B., D.P.H.

Surveyor and Chief Public Health Inspector
L. J. Shepherd
C.R.S.I., CERT. OF MEAT AND FOODS, R.S.I., M.A.P.H.I.

Deputy Surveyor and Public Health Inspector
W. E. Large
CERT. OF MEAT AND FOODS, R.S.I., M.A.P.H.I.

Additional Public Health Inspector
E. G. John, CERT. P.H.I.E.B., M.A.P.H.I.

Technical Assistant
B. W. H. Martin, A.M.I.P.H.E.

Medical Officer of Health's Assistant
Miss P. B. Fletcher
(Resigned 30.6.65)

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Mr. Chairman and Councillors,

I beg to submit the Annual Report on the health of the District for the year 1965. During the year Dr. Allen-Price was your Medical Officer of Health, but owing to his death he is unable to report on work done in 1965. I knew him slightly and was always delighted by his pleasant and stimulating company on the occasions when we met.

I am grateful to Dr. Mary Budding for writing the following short obituary:

'Dr. Allen-Price will be long remembered for his cancer research work in West Devon, for which he was known nationally and internationally, and his publications were frequently quoted in medical journals. It is sad that his final research results were unpublished at the time of his death. His keen and enquiring mind, however, had also engaged in other researches, notable among them being the disease of poliomyelitis. He was perhaps the first – certainly, I believe, in this country–to realise the enteric mode of spread, and published a paper emphasizing this in 1952 (in the *Journal of the Royal Sanitary Institute* entitled 'The Incidence of Poliomyelitis in West Devon during the past Fifteen Years'), in which he put forward this theory. Without doubt he was a noteworthy and outstanding Medical Officer of Health, who always put the health of the community under his care first and foremost, without fear or favour.'

May I thank all those who have contributed to this Report.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient servant,

Robert Walker,
Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION 'A'

General Statistics

Area (statute acres)	151,111
Population – 1951 census	16,298
Population – 1961 census	15,509
Estimated home population – mid-1965	15,790
Parishes	25
Number of inhabited dwellings	4,800
Rateable value	£421,334
Product of the Penny Rate	£1,666
Loan Debt	£835,589

Vital Statistics

Live Births	*Male*	*Female*		*Total*
Legitimate	129	93	=	222
Illegitimate	9	8	=	17
				239
Deaths	113	75	=	188

Population *Year*	*Mid-year Population*	*Birth Rate*	*Death Rate*
1961	15,140	14.8	16.3
1962	15,250	17.1	13.9
1963	15,390	16.5	13.9
1964	15,670	15.7	13.4
1965	15,790	15.1	11.9

Live Births	
Number	239
Rate per 1,000 population	15.1
Corrected Birth Rate	18.7
Illegitimate Live Births (per cent of total live births)	7.1%
Still Births	
Number	5
Rate per 1,000 total live and still births	20.5

Total Live and Still Births	244
Infant Deaths	
(deaths under 1 year)	3
Infant Mortality Rates	
Total infant deaths per 1,000 total live births ..	12.5
Legitimate infant deaths per 1,000 legitimate live births	13.5
Illegitimate infant deaths per 1,000 illegitimate live births	—
Neo-Natal Mortality Rate	
(deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births)	4.2
Early Neo-Natal Mortality Rate	
(deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live births)	4.2
Perinatal Mortality Rate	
(still births and deaths under 1 week combined per 1,000 total live and still births)	24.6
Maternal Mortality (including abortion)	
Number of deaths	—
Rate per 1,000 total live and still births ..	—
Deaths	
Number of deaths	188
Crude death rate per 1,000 population ..	11.9
Corrected death rate	10.4
The chief causes of death were as follows:	
Tuberculosis, Other	1
Syphilitic disease	3
Cancer (including leukaemia)	40
Vascular diseases	29
Coronary diseases	41
Hypertension with heart disease	4
Other heart disease	18
Other circulatory disease	8
Pneumonia	6
Bronchitis	6
Other diseases of the respiratory system ..	1
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	5
Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	2
Nephritis and Nephrosis	3
Hyperplasia of prostate	2
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	13
Motor vehicle accidents	3
All other accidents	1
Suicide	2

Age at Death Table

Age at Death	*Male*	*Female*
Infants under 4 weeks	1	–
Infants 4 weeks and under 1 year	1	1
1–4 years	–	–
5–14 years	1	–
15–24 years	1	–
25–34 years	–	–
35–44 years	2	2
45–54 years	3	5
55–64 years	23	9
65–74 years	33	15
75 years and over	48	43
Total ..	113	75

SECTION 'B'

General Provision of Health Services

The general provision of health services remain as in previous years.

Welfare Foods

The W.V.S. continue to give most valuable assistance distributing these foods to the general public.

Ambulance Service

The St. John Ambulance Brigade, under delegated powers from the Local County Health Authority, continue to give a highly satisfactory twenty-four-hour cover for the whole district.

Maternity Accommodation

During the year two hundred and seventy-six babies were born in the Tavistock Maternity Home, as follows:

Tavistock Urban District	51
Tavistock Rural District	115
Other Districts	110

Forty-eight per cent of the births registered to the Rural District took place in the Tavistock Maternity Home.

Mass Radiography Service

From early in 1965 it changed from an annual visit of several days to regular fortnightly visits, for one hour, throughout the year. 363 persons were examined and no cases of active tuberculosis were discovered. The Unit also visited H.M. Prison, Princetown, during the year.

SECTION 'C'

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area

Water Supply

Mr. Young, District Engineer to the North Devon Water Board, has submitted the following Report on progress during the year:

'Prewley Works have again supplied the whole of this area. Treatment of the raw water is carried out at these works prior to entering supply reservoirs.

An automatic audible water-level recorder has been installed at the Bere Alston Reservoir.

Renewal of the very old mains in Mary Tavy and Peter Tavy continues.

Water samples have been good with one exception. A Class I sample was obtained on a re-sample. 98 samples were taken as follows:

Bere Alston (Parish of Bere Ferrers)	15
Bere Ferrers (Parish of Bere Ferrers)	11
Brentor (Parish of Brentor)	9
Chillaton (Parish of Milton Abbot)	9
Chipshop (Parish of Lamerton)	1
Gulworthy (Tavistock Hamlets)	2
Horrabridge (Parish of Horrabridge)	9
Lamerton (Parish of Lamerton)	11
Lifton (Parish of Lifton)	7
Lydford (Parish of Lydford)	4
Mary Tavy (Parish of Mary Tavy)	10
Milton Abbot (Parish of Milton Abbot)	1
Peter Tavy (Parish of Peter Tavy)	9'

Limited success has been achieved in persuading people to connect to the Water Board mains where they have been laid but, as the percentage should be better during the coming year, it will probably prove necessary to take formal action.

Forty-eight samples of water were taken from private supplies and submitted for bacteriological examination, of these forty were satisfactory. In cases where unsatisfactory samples were initially obtained, the occupiers of the premises concerned were advised on precautionary and remedial measures which should be taken, and repeat samples were taken.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal

The new sewage disposal works for Bere Alston and Horrabridge were commenced towards the end of the year and should both be operating by the end of the ensuing year. It is anticipated that shortly before that time the embargo placed by the Cornwall River Authority on further connections to the main sewer in these villages will be lifted.

It is hoped that the proposed sewage disposal works and sewerage for Sydenham Damerel will also be completed by the end of the coming year.

Plans are proceeding for the new sewage disposal works at Walkhampton and for the sewering of Lewdown.

The maintenance of all sewage disposal works has been regularly carried out mainly by direct labour, but also by contract as and when necessary.

Several blockages have occurred in the main sewers in the District, all of which were cleared as soon as possible after notification, apart from one at Princetown, which necessitated opening a long length of ground and carrying out improvements. It is hoped ultimately, by use of the winching equipment purchased during the year, to scour several of the main sewers which were laid with an exceedingly slight fall and are known to contain a considerable amount of silt, in order to prevent some of the more serious blockages and to improve the flow.

Refuse Collection

Direct-labour staff continued to carry out the routine refuse collection, and this service has been adequately maintained throughout the year.

During the latter part of the year the Council took delivery of a second fore-and-aft tipper-type of refuse vehicle. This vehicle is capable of carrying a larger load than the old one, resulting in a saving of time and increased collection.

Two new tips, one at Cotts, Bere Alston, and one at Brentor, were opened during the year, and the tip at Bowden Down was closed. During the summer months the Council were the subject of much adverse criticism from the Press and television newsreel with regard to tips, particularly at Cotts, Bowden Down and Wheal Franco, Horrabridge. This criticism resulted in the closing down of Bowden Down and the temporary closing down of Cotts.

As stated in previous years, the general public are not prepared to tolerate short-term nuisances with regard to refuse tips, and this has been most apparent this year. Consequently, tip maintenance has greatly increased with the resultant additional expenditure.

Public Conveniences

This year again vandals have been at work in the public conveniences in the district, particularly at Yelverton. The main objects of vandalism have been the coin locks fitted to the W.C.s and, following the District Auditor's report, all coin locks were removed from the conveniences at Horrabridge, Buckland Monachorum, Bere Alston and Leg o' Mutton Corner, Yelverton, primarily due to the cost of repairs being far in excess of income.

A small number of complaints were received about the conditions of the conveniences, caused principally through misuse, but, following remedial measures, all would now appear to be satisfactory.

Maintenance has been carried out regularly, despite the additional and unnecessary work caused by vandals.

Public Health Inspections of the District

The following table shows the number of visits in connection with various routine work, in addition to maintenance work shown under the various sections:

Visits to Council Houses	972
Complaints investigated	248
Visits *re* Housing Acts	87
Visits *re* Public Health Acts	213
Visits *re* Grants	245
Visits *re* Caravan Sites	24
Visits *re* Drainage Works	134
Tests for New Drains	80
To Buildings in Course of Construction	1,213
Number of Plans Submitted	477
Visits in Connection with Above	302
Visits *re* Petroleum Licences	6
Visits *re* Sewerage or Sewage Disposal	762
Visits *re* Water Supplies	90
Visits *re* Refuse Disposal	273
Visits *re* Rodent Control	789
Visits *re* Public Conveniences	252
Visits *re* Food Premises	91
Visits *re* Slaughterhouses	215
Miscellaneous Visits	549

Factories Act, 1961

Tables concerning this Act are shown below and on pages 8 and 9.

Factories Act, 1961

1. Inspections for Purposes of Provisions as to Health (including inspections made by the Public Health Inspectors)

Premises	*Number on Register*	*Inspections*	*Number of*	
			Written Notices	*Occupiers Prosecuted*
i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority	4	8	—	—
ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authorities	35	42	—	—
iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding Out-workers' premises) ..	14	29	—	—
Total	53	79	—	—

2. Cases in which Defects were Found

Particulars	*Number of cases in which defects were found*				*Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted*
	Found	*Remedied*	*Referred*		
			To H.M. Inspector	*By H.M. Inspector*	
Want of Cleanliness	2	2	—	—	—
Overcrowding ..	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature ..	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation ..	1	1	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors ..	1	1	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences: *a*) Insufficient ..	1	1	—	—	—
b) Unsuitable or defective ..	—	—	—	—	—
c) Not separate for the sexes	1	1	—	—	—
Other offences (not including Out-work)	1	1	—	—	—
Total ..	7	7	—	—	—

3. OUT-WORK (Sections 133 and 134)

Nature of Work	SECTION 133			SECTION 134		
	Number of Out-workers in August list required by Section 133 (1) (*c*)	*Number of cases of default in sending lists to Council*	*Number of prosecutions for failure to supply lists*	*Number of instances of work in unwholesome premises*	*Notices served*	*Prosecutions*
Wearing Apparel (making, etc.)	2	—	—	—	—	—

SECTION 'D'

Housing

Under the provisions of the Housing Act, 1957, five dwellings were represented as unfit for human habitation; in three cases Demolition Orders were made and in the other two cases Closing Orders were made. Informal action was taken under the provisions of the Housing Act, 1957, and the Public Health Acts of 1936 and 1961.

The construction of eight houses at Lifton and nine houses at Bere Alston was commenced during the year for the Council, and all should be occupied during 1966.

Private enterprise showed a slight increase, eighty-nine houses being erected compared with eighty-five in 1964.

Five applications for Discretionary Grants were approved by the Council, the aggregate award being £1,380.

Applications for Standard Grants rose slightly, the aggregate paid totalling £2,750 towards the provision of twenty baths, twenty-one washhand basins, twenty-two hot-water supplies, eighteen water closets and twelve food stores.

Following the coming into operation of the Housing Act, 1964, considerably more work was brought to bear on the Department due to the increased amount of grant payable, particularly in connection with extensions for bathrooms, construction of septic tanks and piped water supplies for the first time. The effect of this new legislation was felt particularly this year, but all would now appear to be proceeding smoothly.

The Council continued to implement the Small Dwellings Acquisition Acts, 1899–1923, and Section 43 of the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1958, as amended. Seven applications being approved.

The waiting-list for Council house accommodation is tabulated herewith:

Locality	*Total on Waiting-list*	*Agricultural*	*Non-Agricultural*	*Retirement Pensioners*	*No. with separate homes*
Bere Alston ..	42	7	22	13	34
Bere Ferrers ..	6	–	4	2	6
Brentor	2	1	1	–	2
Chillaton	2	1	–	1	2
Buckland Monachorum ..	10	1	9	–	8
Grenofen	3	–	2	1	2
Horrabridge ..	34	2	27	5	32
Lamerton	14	2	11	1	14
Lewdown and Stowford ..	2	1	1	–	2
Lifton	37	4	31	2	34
Lydford	3	–	2	1	3
Mary Tavy ..	5	–	4	1	3
Meavy	6	–	6	–	4
Milton Abbot ..	11	5	6	–	9
Peter Tavy ..	3	–	3	–	3
Princetown ..	6	–	5	1	5
Sampford Spiney	1	–	1	–	1
Walkhampton ..	5	–	5	–	5
Yelverton	13	–	12	–	10
Miscellaneous ..	8	1	7	–	7
TOTAL ..	213	25	159	28	186

Council Houses in the Rural District

Parish	*Village*	*Number of Dwellings*	*Total Number in Parish*
Bere Ferrers	Bere Alston ..	122	–
	Bere Ferrers ..	10	132
Bradstone	—	–	–
Brentor	Brentor	14	14
Buckland Monachorum ..	Yelverton	8	–
	Buckland	47	55
Coryton	—	–	–
Dunterton	—	–	–
Horrabridge	Horrabridge ..	108	108
Kelly	Kelly	2	2
Lamerton	Lamerton	33	33
Lewtrenchard	—	–	–
Lifton	Lifton	45	45
Lydford	Lydford	9	–
	Princetown ..	24	33
Marystowe	Near Lewdown ..	4	4
Mary Tavy	Mary Tavy ..	34	34
Meavy	Meavy	12	12
Milton Abbot	Chillaton	16	–
	Milton Abbot ..	8	24
Peter Tavy	Peter Tavy	14	14
Sampford Spiney	Sampford Spiney ..	8	8
Sheepstor	—	–	–
Stowford	Stowford	4	4
Sydenham Damerel	—	–	–
Tavistock Hamlets	—	–	–
Thrushelton	Lobhill	2	2
Walkhampton	Walkhampton ..	40	40
Whitchurch	Grenofen	8	8
		TOTAL	572

SECTION 'E'

Inspection and Supervision of Food

The principal food premises within the Rural District are as follows:

Canteens	8
Wet Fish	2
Dry Fish	2
Butchers' Shops	16
Dairies	14
General Stores	76
Bakehouses	4
Hotels and Guest Houses	40
Public Houses	33
Restaurants	19
Manufacturing Premises	7

Ice-cream

Once again there was a slight increase in the number of premises registered for sale of ice-cream under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955; there now being 70 as compared with 67 premises in 1964.

Meat Inspection

There are still three Licensed Slaughterhouses in the District which are all well maintained, and inspection of carcases killed continues at a hundred per cent. There were no cases of Cysticercus Bovis or Generalised Tuberculosis found and there was a decrease this year in Localised Tuberculosis. There was a reduction in the number of parts of carcases condemned.

The table below shows the number of animals killed and inspected and also the percentage condemned.

CARCASES AND OFFAL INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED IN WHOLE OR IN PART

	Cattle excluding Cows	*Cows*	*Calves*	*Sheep and Lambs*	*Pigs*
Number killed (if known)	89	—	1	344	123
Number inspected	89	—	1	344	123
All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci: Whole carcases condemned ..	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ..	2	—	—	12	4
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and Cysticerci	2.25%	—	—	3.54%	3.25%
Tuberculosis only: Whole carcases condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ..	—	—	—	—	1
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	—	—	—	—	0.91%
Cysticercosis: Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ..	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration ..	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—

Food Poisoning

No cases of food poisoning were notified in the District during the year.

SECTION 'F'

Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and Other Diseases

Cases of infectious diseases which have been notified by the Medical Practitioners and the School Authorities are set out in the accompanying tables.

Eighteen cases of winter vomiting occurred within twenty-four hours among children in Milton Abbot. No cause was found.

Tuberculosis

No deaths were recorded during the year. Two new cases were admitted to the Register.

At the end of the year eighty-four cases remained on the Register, as follows:

Pulmonary		*Non-Pulmonary*	
Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
35	27	8	14

In two cases patients had lesions of pulmonary and non-pulmonary nature.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

NOTIFICATIONS RECEIVED FROM GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

	Measles		*Dysentery*	
	M	*F*	*M*	*F*
Under 1 year	–	–	–	–
1 year	1	2	–	–
2 years	2	6	–	–
3 years	4	5	–	–
4 years	9	4	1	–
5–9 years	26	30	1	1
10–14 years	–	1	–	1
15–24 years	–	–	–	–
25 years and over ..	–	–	–	–
Age unknown	2	3	–	–
TOTAL	44	51	2	2

NOTIFICATIONS RECEIVED FROM SCHOOL AUTHORITIES

	Chicken Pox	*Mumps*	*Measles*	*Conjunctivitis*
HORRABRIDGE	–	–	3	–
LAMERTON	–	21	–	–
MEAVY	–	27	1	1
MILTON ABBOT	–	7	1	–
WALKHAMPTON	16	21	17	–
TOTAL	16	76	22	1

Details of Properties supplied by the North Devon Water Board in the Tavistock Rural District at 31st December, 1965

Parish	*No. of Domestic Properties*	*No. of Farms*	*No. of other Meter supplies (ex cattle-troughs)*	*Total Properties*	*Population supplied (estimated)*
Bere Ferrers ..	691	28	46	765	2,295
Brentor ..	83	14	9	106	318
Coryton ..	3	1	1	5	15
Horrabridge (part)	169	4	–	173	519
Lamerton ..	110	28	6	144	432
Lewdown ..	5	1	–	6	18
Lewtrenchard	37	9	6	52	156
Lifton	251	15	14	280	840
Lydford ..	109	11	2	122	366
Marystowe ..	15	5	2	22	66
Mary Tavy ..	175	10	14	199	597
Milton Abbot ..	74	13	1	88	264
Peter Tavy ..	58	5	1	64	192
Sampford Spiney	34	4	1	39	117
Stowford ..	31	12	2	45	135
Sydenh'm Dam'l	16	6	1	23	69
Tavistock Hamlets	55	24	6	85	255
Thrushelton ..	9	9	1	19	57
Whitchurch ..	55	5	–	60	180
Total ..	1,980	204	113	2,297	6,891

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